

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

1. Definition

Visual Impairment including blindness means impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

Visual Impairment includes at least one of the following:

- (1) visual acuity in the better eye or both eyes with best possible correction:
 - (a) legal blindness – 20/200 or less at distance and/or near;
 - (b) low vision – 20/50 or less at distance and/or near.
- (2) visual field restriction with both eyes:
 - (a) legal blindness – remaining visual field of 20 degrees or less;
 - (b) low vision – remaining visual field of 60 degrees or less;
 - (c) medical and educational documentation of progressive loss of vision, which may in the future affect the student's ability to learn visually.
- (3) other Visual Impairment, not perceptual in nature, resulting from a medically documented condition.

2. Evaluation

The characteristics as identified in the Visual Impairment Definition are present.

Evaluation Procedures

Evaluation of Visual Impairment shall include the following:

- (1) evaluation by an ophthalmologist or optometrist that documents the eye condition with the best possible correction;
- (2) a written functional vision and media assessment, completed or compiled by a licensed teacher of students with visual impairments that includes:
 - (a) observation of visual behaviors at school, home, or other environments;
 - (b) educational implications of eye condition based upon information received from eye report;
 - (c) assessment and/or screening of expanded core curriculum skills (orientation and mobility, social interaction, visual efficiency, independent living, recreation and leisure, career education, assistive technology, and compensatory skills) as well as an evaluation of the child's reading and writing skills, needs, appropriate reading and writing media, and current and future needs for braille;
 - (d) school history and levels of educational performance; and
- (3) documentation, including observation and/or assessment, of how Visual Impairment adversely impacts the child's educational performance in his/her learning environment.

Evaluation Participants

Information shall be gathered from the following persons in the evaluation of Visual Impairment:

- (1) the parent;
- (2) the child's general education classroom teacher; and
- (3) a licensed teacher of students with Visual Impairments;
- (4) a licensed special education teacher;
- (5) an ophthalmologist or optometrist;
- (6) other professional personnel, as indicated (e.g., low vision specialist, orientation and mobility instructor, school psychologist).